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## Press Release

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### **American, German officials to honor 20 years of environmental success**

**HEILDELBURG, Germany** – United States Army and Air Force Officials, together with officials from the Rheinland-Pfalz Ministry for Environment, Forestry and Consumer Protection, on March 26 will honor the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the US/Rheinland-Pfalz Environmental Working Group at the Marksburg in Braubach, Germany.

The Director of Installation Management Command Europe Region, Russell B. Hall, and Ms. Margit Conrad, the Rheinland-Pfalz Minister for Environment, Forestry, and Consumer Protection are among the key note speakers listed to take part in the program. They will be joined by representatives from the U.S. Forces and German government to recognize the accomplishments of the US/Rheinland-Pfalz Environmental Working Group, which continues to serve as a point of contact and coordination body for environmental matters for Rheinland-Pfalz agencies and U.S. Forces headquarters.

On February 17, 1987, then Rheinland-Pfalz Minister President, Dr. Bernhard Vogel, and General Glenn K. Otis, Commander in Chief, U.S. Army Europe and Seventh Army, signed the agreement to establish a US/Rheinland-Pfalz Environmental Working Group on the Marksburg in Braubach. The Working Group includes representatives from the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of the Interior, the Federal Agency for Real Estate Issues (BImA), the Military District Administrations (WBV), the U.S. Army, and the U.S. Air Force.

2/2/2

## **Environmental Working Group**

In their scheduled remarks, Minister Conrad and Hall point out the role-model character that the Working Group has as a forum for addressing environmental matters. Because of this character, the Working Group actively contributes to environmental protection in Rheinland-Pfalz.

In the past 20 years, the Working Group dealt with many major environmental matters:

- Systematic survey of contaminated sites and risk potentials on Sending States Forces accommodations that will be or have been released as part of the conversion program.
- Soil and ground-water protection in the Kaiserslautern area focusing on contaminated sites and sites suspected to be contaminated on U.S. Forces accommodations. On the initiative of the US/Rheinland-Pfalz Environmental Working Group in Rheinland-Pfalz, a coordination group was established to ensure a more intensive cooperation between Rheinland-Pfalz authorities and the U.S. Forces in the field of soil and groundwater protection.
- Intensive information and experience exchange on developments in the field of environmental laws and technical and scientific environmental issues.
- The habitat network “NATURA 2000,” which is based on the Flora Fauna Habitat Directive and the Wild Bird Protection Directive for species and habitat protection.

During the past 20 years, the US/Rheinland-Pfalz Environmental Working Group has worked and resolved several joint environmental matters. The desire is to continue the constructive and successful cooperation between the Rheinland-Pfalz Government and the U.S. Forces.